

P.G. #79-46

1865

Union Chapel Site and Cemetery
Valley Lane, Upper Marlboro, Md.
Priv/Unocc/Cemetery/Unexposed

This is a large cemetery extending from the old Black community of Upper Marlboro to the Route #4 bridge over the Western Branch. Near the present lane is the area where the old Union Chapel stood.

In 1865, Frederick Sasscer deeded five acres of land to three Black trustees of the new Washington Conference of the Methodist Church, for the establishment of a church and burying ground. The small building came to be known as Union Chapel, and it belonged to the Marlboro Circuit which later included Brooks Chapel at Nottingham, Niles Chapel (Centreville) and the (Carroll) Chapel at Mitchellville. Members of Union Chapel were much involved in the movement for Negro education. Before the Freedmen's Bureau school was completed (in 1868), classes were held in Union Chapel.

For more than fifty years, Union Chapel was a focal point for the Black community of Upper Marlboro. Even after Union Memorial Church was built in 1916 to replace it, the old Chapel remained in use as a social center. The graveyard is still used by Union Memorial Church, and is a significant reminder of the historic church which once stood there.

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Survey No. P.G.79-46

Magi No. 1760004632

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Site of Union Chapel and Graveyard

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Valley Lane ☐ not for publication

city, town Upper Marlboro ☐ vicinity of congressional district 4

state Maryland county P.G.

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> othergraveyard

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of Union Memorial United Methodist Church

street & number 14418 Old Marlboro Pike telephone no.: 627-5088

city, town Upper Marlboro state and zip code Md. 20772

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P. G. Courthouse liber FS #3

street & number Main Street folio 189

city, town Upper Marlboro state Md.

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. P.G. #79-46

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☒ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This is a large cemetery extending from the old Black community of Upper Marlboro to the Rt. #4 bridge over the Western Branch. Near the present lane is the area where the old Union Chapel stood.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Black History

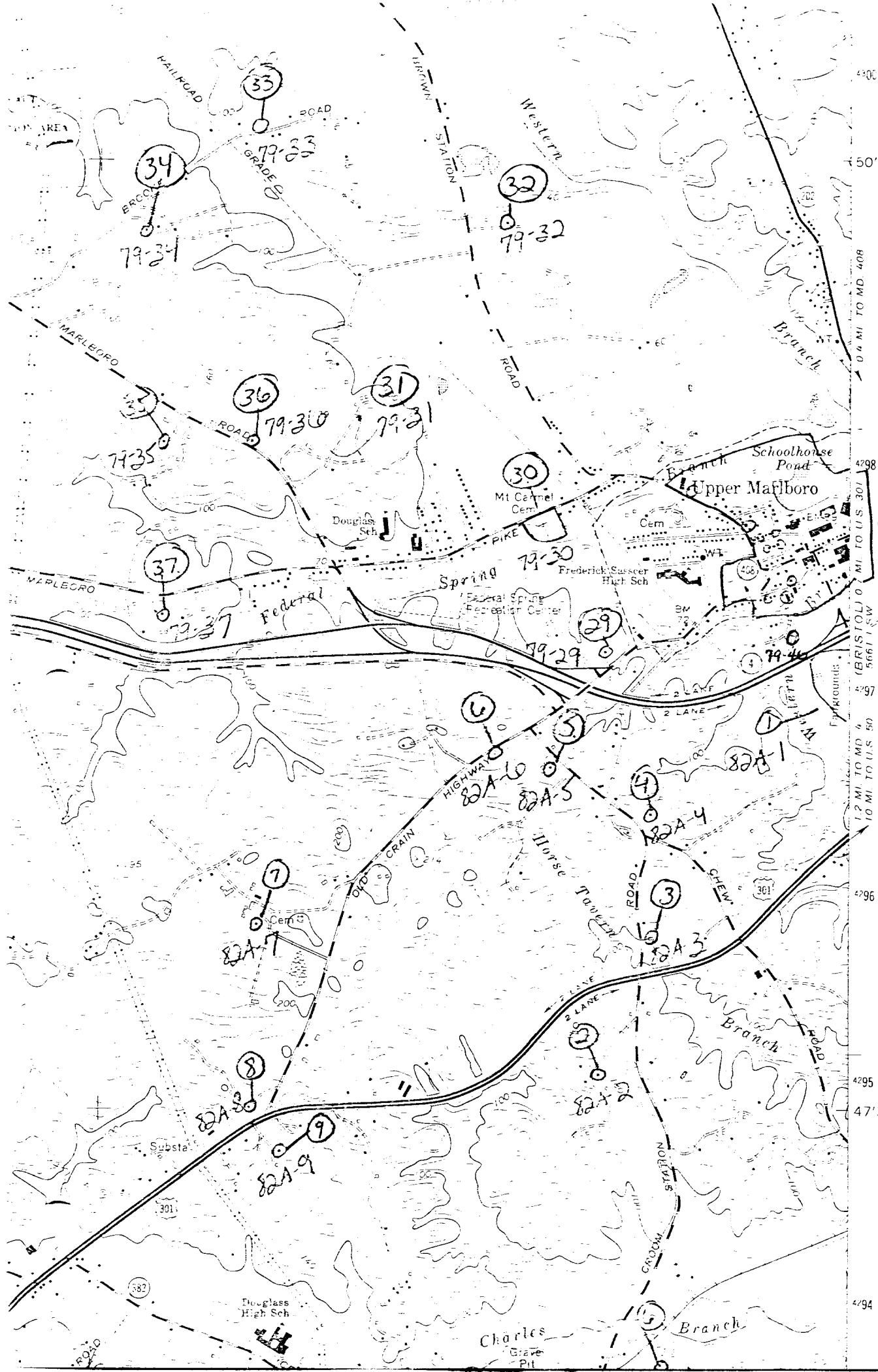
Specific dates	1865	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
	and/or	
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

In October 1865, Frederick Sasscer, a leading citizen of Marlborough, deeded 5 acres of his farm land to three black men, Henson Greenleaf, Nicholas Greenleaf, and George Bowling, who had been appointed trustees by the Washington Colored Methodist Conference. The land was to be used for the establishment of a church, and a burying ground for the "Colored" Methodist church. This period immediately following the Civil War saw the building of many Black churches and the Marlboro Church was finished early in this period. It was known as Union Chapel, and belonged to the Methodist Circuit which included also Brooks Chapel at Nottingham, Niles Chapel (Centreville) and the (Carroll) Chapel at Mitchellville.

From the beginning, the members of Union Chapel were much involved in the negro education movement. The three above-cited trustees of the "Colored" Methodist Church became the president, secretary and treasurer (respectively) of the Free Colored School Society. It was originally planned that the school would be built on the church ground, and Washington Langford, Methodist minister for the Marlboro Circuit, was active in the preparations for its construction. Before the school was built, classes were held in the Union Chapel.

For more than a half-century, Union Chapel was a focal point for the Black community of Upper Marlboro. Even after Union Memorial Church was built in 1916 to replace it, the old Union Chapel remained standing for several years as a community gathering place; and after it was torn down its site was the scene of camp meetings. Now a quiet and secluded area apart from the center of town, the chapel site and graveyard are significant reminders of the historic church which once stood there.



#3 79-
(13-28)

P.G.#79-46

UNION CHAPEL
SITE



P. G. #79-46

Union Chapel Site/Cemetery
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
January 1983
View to east
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.